

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE**

NTL No. 2003-N02

Effective Date: February 5, 2003

Expiration Date: November 1, 2003

**NOTICE TO LESSEES AND OPERATORS OF FEDERAL OIL AND GAS
LEASES AND PIPELINE RIGHT-OF-WAY HOLDERS
ON THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF**

Reminder Concerning Periodic Inspection of Unmanned Fixed OCS Platforms

The Minerals Management Service (MMS) regulations at 30 CFR 250.912(a) require all OCS platforms be inspected periodically in accordance with the provisions of American Petroleum Institute (API), Recommended Practice (RP) 2A for Planning, Designing, and Constructing Fixed Offshore Platforms, Section 14 (Surveys). The regulation at 30 CFR 250.912(b) requires you to submit an annual report to the MMS that lists the platforms you inspected during the preceding 12 months and describes the extent, area, and type of each inspection.

API RP 2A was incorporated by reference into MMS regulations in 1988, establishing a requirement for periodic inspections. Section 14 in both the Nineteenth Edition (August 1, 1991) and the Twentieth Edition (July 1, 1993) of API RP 2A specifies that you perform a Level III survey on all unmanned fixed platforms every 11 to 15 years (see Table 14.4.2). For platforms installed before 1988, the 15-year period ends this year. If you have not performed a Level III survey on an unmanned platform since 1988, you must perform such a survey and include the results in your next annual inspection report required by 30 CFR 250.912(b), which you must submit to the MMS by November 1, 2003.

Section 14.3.3 of API RP 2A describes Level III surveys. A Level III survey consists of an underwater visual inspection of pre-selected areas that an engineering evaluation determines are particularly susceptible to structural damage, pre-selected areas where repeated inspections are desirable to monitor their integrity over time, and areas where a Level II survey has indicated damage or suspected damage. Before you perform a Level III survey, you must sufficiently clean the area of marine growth to permit thorough inspection.

Contact

Please address any questions regarding platform inspections or reports to Mr. Tommy Laurendine of the MMS Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, Office of Technical and Structural Support, by telephone at (504) 736-5709 or by e-mail at tommy.laurendine@mms.gov.

Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) Statement. The information collection provisions referred to in this NTL are intended to provide clarification, description, or interpretation of requirements in 30 CFR 250, subpart I. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the information collection requirements in these regulations and assigned OMB Control Number 1010-0058. This notice does not impose additional information collection requirements subject to the PRA.

2/5/03
Dated.

Thomas A. Readinger
Thomas A. Readinger
Associate Director for
Offshore Minerals Management